Amendments to the Specification

I. TITLE

Amend the Title as follows: METHOD OF CALCULATING SORTING COSTS ~~FOR CHARGEBACK ACCOUNTING~~ FOR AN INCOMING MAIL SORTING APPARATUS

II. ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Amend the Abstract as follows:

This invention overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art by providing a method of calculating sorting costs for incoming mail. The foregoing is accomplished by providing a method that can determine the number and types of mailpieces being sorted and associated that number with addressee information. The combination of the number and types of mailpieces being sorted for the addressees can then be used to calculated a charge back amount by using a predetermined cost per mailpiece. Thus, the present invention is directed to, in a general aspect, a method of calculating sorting costs for an incoming mail sorting apparatus having a database of addressees for use in sorting incoming mailpieces comprising the steps of: collecting information about each one of a plurality of mailpieces sorted using the incoming mail sorting apparatus, the information used to determine a type of mailpiece for each one of the plurality of mailpieces; determining the type of mailpiece using the information collected; and associating the information about each one of the plurality of mailpieces sorted using the incoming mail sorting apparatus with addressee information from the database of addressees; and calculating a piece count for each mailpiece for each addressee; ~~and calculating a charge back amount from the piece count and a predetermined cost~~.

III. SPECIFICATION

○ Amend the paragraph beginning at line 8 on page 1 as follows:

Reference is made to Application Serial No. 09/474,908 (Attorney Docket No. E-969) titled METHOD OF REMOVING MAIL FROM THE MAILSTREAM

USING A MAIL SORTING APPARATUS, assigned to the assignee of this application and filed on even date herewith.

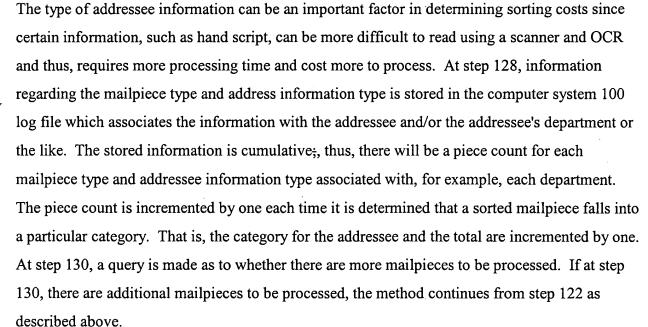o   Amend the paragraph beginning at line 11 on page 3 as follows:

This invention overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art by providing a method of calculating sorting costs for incoming mail. The foregoing is accomplished by providing a method that can determine the number and types of mailpieces being sorted and associated that number with addressee information. The combination of the number and types of mailpieces being sorted for the addressees can then be used to calculated a charge back amount by using a predetermined cost per mailpiece. Thus, the present invention is directed to, in a general aspect, a method of calculating sorting costs for an incoming mail sorting apparatus having a database of addressees for use in sorting incoming mailpieces comprising the steps of: collecting information about each one of a plurality of mailpieces sorted using the incoming mail sorting apparatus, the information used to determine a type of mailpiece for each one of the plurality of mailpieces; determining the type of mailpiece using the information collected; and associating the information about each one of the plurality of mailpieces sorted using the incoming mail sorting apparatus with addressee information from the database of addressees; calculating a piece count for each mailpiece for ah addressee; and calculating a charge back amount from the piece count and a predetermined cost.

o   Amend the paragraph beginning at line 11 on page 3 as follows:

Fig. 3 is a flowchart of an embodiment of the method of calculating sorting charges. At step 120, the method begins. At step 122, the mailpieces are fed using the mail sorting apparatus 8. At step 124 the mailpieces are read and addressee information is determined. The addressee information could be for example, the addressee's name, delivery point code or other suitable information. At step 126, the type of mailpiece is determined. The mailpiece may be determined to be a letter, a flat, a postcard or other type of mailpiece distinguishable by length and thickness. At step 127, the type of addressee information is determined to be hand printed, hand script, machine print, interoffice, interoffice form or other distinguishable addressee information type.

The type of addressee information can be an important factor in determining sorting costs since certain information, such as hand script, can be more difficult to read using a scanner and OCR and thus, requires more processing time and cost more to process. At step 128, information regarding the mailpiece type and address information type is stored in the computer system 100 log file which associates the information with the addressee and/or the addressee's department or the like. The stored information is cumulative;, thus, there will be a piece count for each mailpiece type and addressee information type associated with, for example, each department. The piece count is incremented by one each time it is determined that a sorted mailpiece falls into a particular category. That is, the category for the addressee and the total are incremented by one. At step 130, a query is made as to whether there are more mailpieces to be processed. If at step 130, there are additional mailpieces to be processed, the method continues from step 122 as described above.

o   Amend the paragraph beginning at line 4 on page 5 as follows:

The computer system is connected to a sorting apparatus 8 as illustrated in Fig. 2. The mailpiece sorting apparatus 8 may generally comprise a feeder 10, a scanner 14 (and OCR software, now shown), a mailpiece transporter 16, compartments or bins 20 for receiving sorted mailpieces, and a control system which may be the microprocessor based personal computer system 100 described above. The system may be controlled by a microprocessor controller 100 such as, for example the personal computer 100 with a Pentium II™ microprocessor, which computer 100 is coupled to a database (memory devices) 50 as discussed below. The microprocessor can run an operating system such as a QNX operating system which provides real-time control of the components of the mailpiece sorting apparatus 8. The computer includes appropriate memory devices 108, 114 for storage of information such as an address database. One of ordinary skill in the art would be familiar with the general components of the sorting apparatus upon which the method of the present invention may be performed.